

SCHOOL FACILITIES INITIATIVE TASK FORCE MINUTES
THURSDAY, JUNE 13, 2013 – 7:00 P.M.
TOWN HALL ANNEX, COMMUNITY ROOM 1

I. ROLL CALL

Present: Beaulieu, Bryer, DeMatto, Greenleaf, Heller, Koehler, O'Donnell, Semancik
(8:20 p.m.), Trejo, Volkmann, Watson (7:25 p.m.), Zod
Ex Officio: Somers
Staff: Oefinger, Robarge, Bresnayan
Consultant: Mike Zuba, Ali Church, Tom Jacovitis

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - None

III. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS - None

IV. ITEMS OF BUSINESS

a. Presentation on Educational Programs – Findings from Focus Group Meetings with School Administration and Staff

Tom Jacovitis reviewed a PowerPoint presentation on educational programming. He reviewed the results of his meetings with focus groups comprised of central office staff and administrators regarding anticipated program changes/expansion; program reductions; space assets; anticipated community reaction to school consolidation; and long-range planning issues.

Watson arrived at 7:25 p.m.

Mr. Jacovitis' presentation led to discussions on storage needs, the magnet school model, and theme schools. The next portion of the presentation addressed the impact of facilities on attendance, behavior, health and academic performance.

Discussion followed on optimum school size and creating smaller learning communities in larger schools.

b. Identification of Additional Meeting Dates in July and August

Task Force members agreed to add three meetings to their regular meeting schedule and change the start time for all meetings to 6:30 p.m. The additional meetings are June 27th, July 25th, and August 22nd.

c. Group Discussion and Prioritization of Key Facility Issues and Areas of Concern to Address

Mr. Zuba asked the Task Force to break into small groups to develop a list of key issues that need to be addressed so they could be prioritized.

Significant discussion followed on the need for the Board of Education to establish its vision for the elementary and middle schools. It was ultimately determined that a final Vision Committee Report for the middle schools was adopted on December 12, 2011 and the last Vision Committee Report for the elementary schools was done in 1998.

Somers asked Heller to reach out to the full Town Council and Board of Education and invite them to future meetings to assure that both groups are on the same page. It was also suggested that interim superintendent Sean McKenna attend the meetings.

Greenleaf provided a brief overview of state guidelines on school sizes versus educational specifications developed by the Board of Education.

Semancik arrived at 8:20 p.m.

The Town Manager stated that the Task Force needs to see the Board of Education's vision reports. There are fundamental questions that must be answered by the Board of Education for the Task Force to move forward.

Somers requested that someone who served on the Vision Committee present the reports to the Task Force.

Discussion followed on the focus of the survey and the need to look at the elementary schools as well as the middle schools. Norris encouraged everyone to look at the previously prepared Master Plan for the schools.

Mr. Zuba led Task Force members in a discussion of key issues, which were identified as follows:

- 3 elementary schools that are in the worst shape:
 - Claude Chester
 - S. B. Butler
 - Pleasant Valley
- Middle School
 - Size (1 school would have 1,000 students)
 - Brings students together earlier
 - Integration strategy
 - Larger core facilities
 - Racial balance
 - Cost of operations
- Elimination of portable classrooms

- Use of the schools as community facilities/emergency shelters
- Inter or intra district magnet schools
 - LEARN Marine Science Magnet
- Pre-K program
 - Separate facility?
- Athletic fields/gymnasiums

V. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Beyer, seconded by Watson, to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 p.m.

The motion carried unanimously.